

Ho-158  
River Hill Farms  
Clarksville  
Private

eighteenth and  
nineteenth century

River Hill Farm is a three bay wide, two bay deep, two and a half story, field stone structure which has been faced with stucco and rests on a stone foundation. Its gable roof runs east-west and a wide stone chimney is inset into its west wall. The east bay holds an especially spacious hall which runs the entire length of the building with rectangular north and south entrances.

A two and a half story ashlar stone kitchen wing rests against the west wall of the original structure.

Especially noteworthy as the home of Major Henry Owings of Owingsville, now called Simpsonville who added the kitchen wing, River Hill Farm today comprises a game preserve for the Howard Research and Development Corporation and residence for its game keeper.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Four Brothers Portion/ Richard B. Owings Residence

AND/OR COMMON

River Hill Farm

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER Route 32, Guilford Road

Cong. Dist 6

CITY, TOWN  
Clarksville

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Howard

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Howard Research &amp; Development Corp

Attn. Tax Comm. Prop. Taxes

531-6102  
774-4721 (Residen:  
Telephone #: Game Keeper  
Mr. Jackson

STREET &amp; NUMBER

P.O. Box 833

CITY, TOWN

Columbia

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21044

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hall of Records

Tax Map 35,  
p.70

Liber #: 401

Folio #: 124

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Howard County Court House

CITY, TOWN

Ellicott City

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Howard County Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1977

—FEDERAL ☒ STATE —COUNTY —LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Maryland Historical Trust

CITY, TOWN

21 State Circle, Annapolis

STATE

Maryland

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED**CHECK ONE**☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED**CHECK ONE**☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

River Hill is a three bay wide, one bay deep, two and half story, gabled roof (running east-west) field stone covered with stucco building. A wide brick chimney, covered with stucco, is inset into the west wall.

The main entrance, and open bible and cross paneled door faces south surmounted by a three light transom in the east bay. A hipped roof one story high, open porch supported by four square colums held by arched brackets and two pilasters runs along its entire south elevation. A wide granite step leads to the wooden floor of the porch which is supported by stone piles.

Fenestration is rectangular double-hung, with six-over-six lights, decorated with wooden sills and shutters.

The west wall holds two rectangular six-over-six attic windows. From this wall springs a two bay wide, two bay deep, two story high, stone house constructed of more regularly cut stones. A one story shed roofed semi-enclosed porch lies along its south elevation.

Its west wall holds two first and second floor rectangular, double-hung windows with six-over-six lights. The ground slopes north toward the middle Patuxent River creating an English basement on the north elevation. Windows on this west wing have flat stone lintels. The north elevation holds a square basement window and first floor rectangular, double-hung window with six-over-six lights. Two large trees lie north of the house with a granite stairway leading down to a small foot bridge over a brook running through the property. Beyond flows the Middle Patuxent River.

The basement or ground floor north wall of the original field stone house holds a rectangular, double-hung window with six-over-six lights in the east bay, a large picture window which has been cut out of the central bay, and a twelve light rectangular entrance door in the west bay. Four cement piles rise three stories high to support a first, second and third floor screened in porch, which rests along the entire north wall of the old field stone house. The porch and picture window additions were added by Mr. Gallagher sometime in the 1940's or 1950's.

In the original kitchen of the house which is located on the ground floor of the field stone structure is a cooking fire place with original crane. The basement is divided by a two foot thick bearing wall constructed of field stone. A wide battan wood door and latch lead from the old kitchen (now the den) into the furnace and utility room, whose west wall holds an old cooking fire place with baking ovens.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

The East Elevation of the original fieldstone house holds a basement opening with wooden lintel, a first floor and second floor, rectangular, double-hung window with six-over-six lights and two smaller rectangular, double hung attic windows with six - over - six lights. A fire escape runs up this side of the house to the attic, an addition built in the early seventies when it was used as a dormitory and half-way house.

A gabled roof (running north-south) stone house, lying west was used as a smoke house.

The interior of the house features open bible and cross paneled doors, an exceptional staircase and grand hall located in the east bay of the original fieldstone building and running its entire depth, connected by south and north entrances. Off this hall we find a federal living room whose east wall is interrupted by a central entrance off which lie north and south curvilinear ante rooms which create curved interior east walls (interrupted by the central entrance) for the living room. This federal element is particularly noteworthy. The mantle piece of this room is exceptionally fine, flanked by fluted pilasters.

The dining room remains a fine large rectangular room with similar mantle piece and evidence of a dumb waiter which carried food from the kitchen below.

The present kitchen west wing was constructed quite early and is at least one hundred years old, to which fact Mr. Harwood Owings, Sr. who was born in the house 88 years ago can attest.

A shed roofed, frame, double dormer window on the south elevation of this addition holds a six-over-one window in each component part.

During the time of Richard Owings, father of Harwood Owings, Sr., the farm comprised 500 acres and was extensively cultivated. It is presently a game farm and preserve for the Rouse Company under the direction of Mr. Jackson.

The foundation of a well south west of the house exists as well as large barn.

# **SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The River Hill Farm, now a game preserve for the Howard Research and Development Corporation was at one time a large 500 acre tract of land called Four Brother's Portion. Mica mines are abundant on this property. The Hopkins Atlas of 1878 (see attachment 3) indicates that it was owned by Richard Baker Owings who was raised by his uncle Samuel Owings who lived at Woodlawn Farms. (Woodlawn Farms is now adjacent to the Columbia horse center.) Richard Baker Owings Son, Harwood Owings, Sr. was born in 1889 and raised in this house. He still remembers the cultivation of the 500 acre tract as a large operation, involving way stations where fresh horses were furnished at certain central points. Driving the teams to Baltimore was a big operation. It involved taking advantage of the Baltimore theatre and coming home so late that the youngsters went upstairs backwards, hoping not to be heard coming at that hour. An interesting story is told about a brother of Mr. Harwood Owings. He was a particularly bad shot and was determined to prove otherwise to his brothers. Catching a rabbit, he tied it up and planned to shoot it and prove his worth as a hunter. He shot the rope instead.

There was a tenant house on the property as well as an abundance of lilac trees. Much shannanigans went on during meal time when the boys would tease one another and even grease the head of the small waiter who received the reprimand earned by the "boys". Henry Owings first married Miss Gist and lived here and occupied this home. Later Major Henry Owings married Elizabeth Dorsey. They had three sons; John H., Samuel and Richard Baker. Their daughters were Rebecca and Susan. Major Henry Howard Owings owned all the land to the Middle Patuxent on either side of it. He gave each of the children a piece of land. It is related by family members that the kitchen addition was built after Major Henry Owings second marriage. It is at least eighty years old, circa 1895, for it is remembered to have existed then by Mr. Harwood Owings, Senior. when he was a boy. Mr. Owings had a deed of the property in his possession which gives the following description of the "tract or parcel of land, Four Brothers Portion", in which "Four" has been inserted:

"Beginning for the same at a stone planted at a public road leading from Montgomery County to Owingsville marked upon the Plat A and running thence south 226 perches to a stone now planted at the end of 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> perches on and in the 13th course of said land as run with a retrograde allowance of 1° 45' to correct the variation, thence running and bounding on said land the following courses and distance, to wit, north 64° 30' W 61<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> perches; north 80°, 30' W 14 perches; South 69° 45' W 39 perches; north

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

16°30' E 114 perches . . . . . road trench running with and bounding . . . . . ; to wit North 23°, east 24 perches, north 63°30'; East 23 perches north 73° E 30 perches, north 87°30' East 26 perches, south 86°, East 26 perches south 71°, east 10 perches, thense north 180, east 24 perches thense south 57° east 116 perches thense south 29°, west 17 perches to the place of beginning, containing and now laid out for 200± acres of land surveyed Sept 25, 1846.

This parcel is part of a larger parcel which was cut from Four Brother's Portion. These four brothers may have been the four sons of Major Henry Owings.

Architecturally, the building is noteworthy. Its two and a half feet thick field stone walls have been covered with stucco. The building sits on a stone foundation which has a central retaining wall. According to Mr. John B. Riggs, a descendent who lives in Wilmington, Delaware this floor plan of the house is similar to those of the 18th century found in the Tide water county. The kitchen wing was constructed shortly after Major Henry Owings married Elizabeth Dorsey, circa 1840's.

The main body of the house dates before 1840 by some years.

An interesting federal living room has had a semi circular east wall interrupted by an east entrance. The walls are curved, creating two ante rooms between the hall way located in the east bay and the living room. During the 1930's or 40's, Mr. Gallagher, who then owned the house, added the three story high screened in porch on the north wall of the original stone structure. Mr. Gallagher supposedly ran a night club in Baltimore. While Richard Owings crop farmed the land, Mr. Gallagher used it for a dairy farm. He had a tremendous dairy operation of some 80 - 90 cows.

The interior of the building features the original hall floor laid tongue and groove. Hand wrought shutter hooks and window sashes put together with wooden pegs are also noteworthy. Three of the five original fireplaces in the house are operable. Those are the ones in the living room, the ground floor den which holds the original cooking fireplace and a bedroom fireplace above. The fire place in the dining room has been sealed. Thirty or forty years ago (circa 1940) the attic was finished off.

The foundation of an old well and the existence of the old smoke house also add to its significance which is such as to include it in the National Register of Historic Places and any future local landmark legislation.

## II MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Stein, C.F., Jr. Origins and History of Howard County, Maryland.  
Baltimore, 1972, p.

Warfield, J.D. Founders of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties Maryland.  
Baltimore, 1973. pp 67

Interview with Mrs. Harwood Owings, Sr., wife of previous occupant and Mr.  
and Mrs. Jackson, present residents at Four Brothers Portion, June 20, 1977.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 428.39

Please see attachment 1, Tax Map 35, p.70 (401-124)

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please see attachment 1 Tax Map 35, p.70

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE Maryland COUNTY Howard

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

## II FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Cleora Barnes Thompson, Archivist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Planning & Zoning-Comprehensive Planning Section 465-5000 x257

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

3450 Court House Drive

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Ellicott City

STATE

Maryland

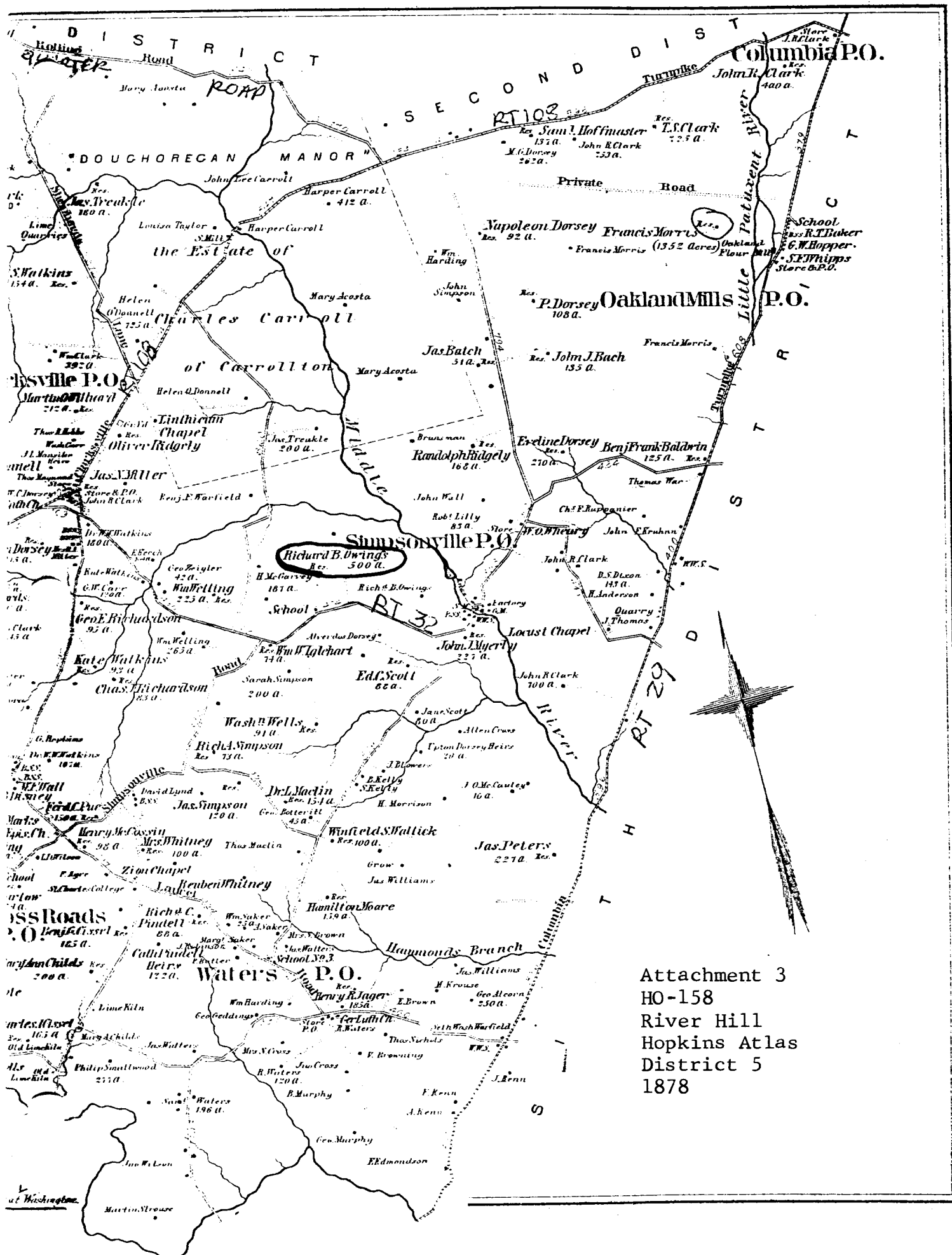
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

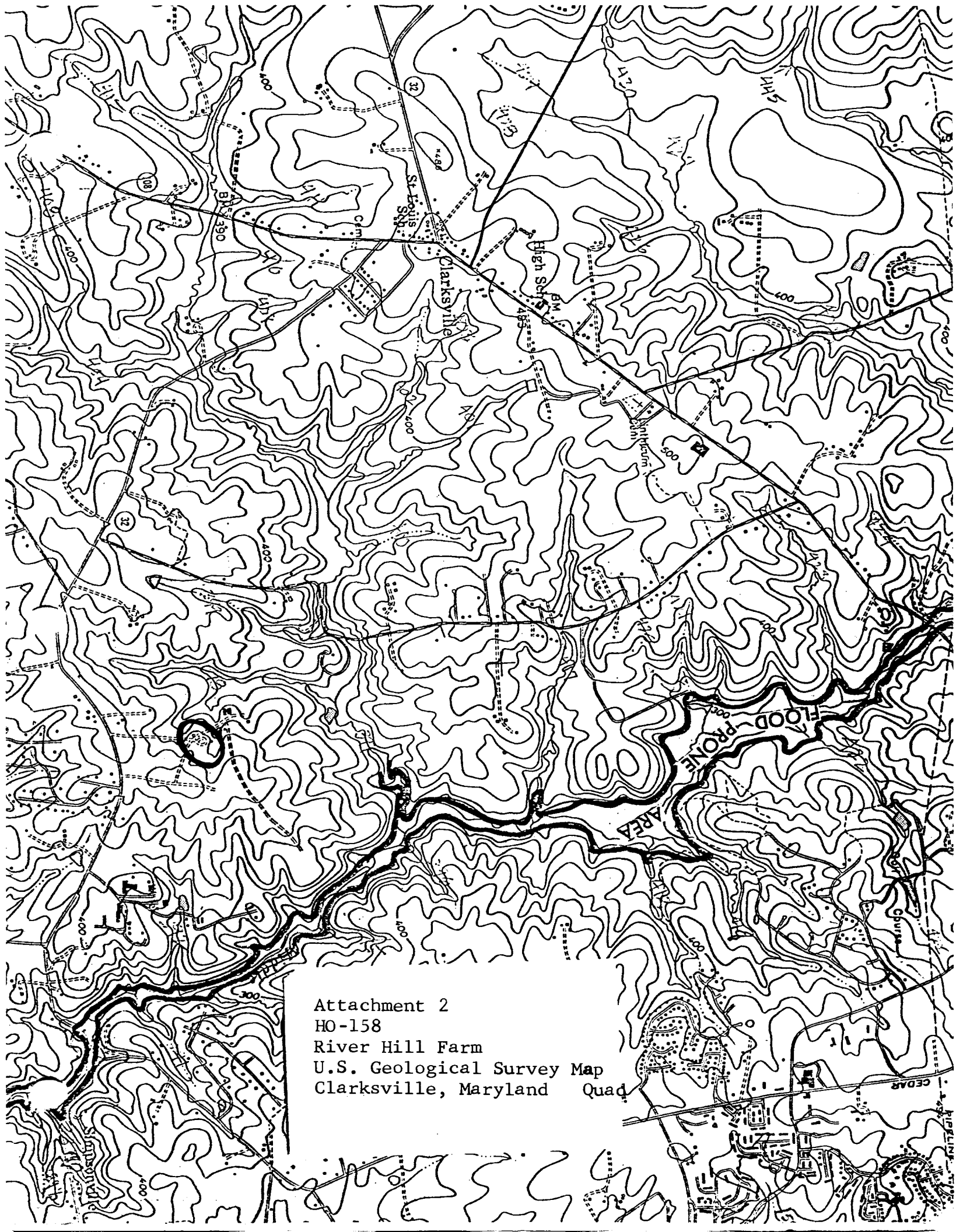
The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438









Attachment 2  
HO-158  
River Hill Farm  
U.S. Geological Survey Map  
Clarksville, Maryland Quad



HO 158

4210

River Hill

J& Mar 72



HD-158  
RIVER HILL FARM

JUNE - 1977

CB THOMPSON